

**Meeting:** Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 22 January 2014  
**Subject:** Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment, Identified Priorities for 2014 - 2015  
**Report of:** Cllr Brian Spurr, Executive Member for Community Services  
**Summary:** This report informs Members of the three priorities and emerging issues that have been identified through the Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment. The priorities have been recommended by the Community Safety Partnership Executive and are subject to public consultation. Members have been invited to comment on the emerging priorities before they are recommended for adoption by the Community Safety Partnership.

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**Advising Officer:** Marcel Coiffait, Director of Community Services  
**Contact Officer:** Joy Craven, Community Safety Partnership Manager, Community Services (0300 300 4649)  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** All  
**Function of:** Council

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## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

1. The agreement of the three priorities, and the subsequent work in reducing offences, incidents and offending, will make a significant contribution to the quality of life experienced by local residents and communities. Joint work on the priorities by all of the community safety statutory partners will also contribute to the delivery of the Council's Medium Term Plan ("Your Priorities 2012 – 2016") priority of 'Enhancing your local community'. Delivery of these priorities will contribute to the reduction of crime, anti-social behaviour, fear of crime and increase public confidence.

### **Financial:**

2. The majority of work is undertaken using existing resources within each partners' organisation. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is responsible for the Community Safety Fund across Bedfordshire and the Partnership will bid for funding to provide additional support to existing resources where suitable.
3. Financially the Community Safety Partnership saves on resources, by pulling together to work on priority areas that effect them all, using an intelligence led approach.

**Legal:**

4. Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council has a statutory duty to do all that it reasonably can to reduce crime and disorder in its' area. The Crime and Disorder Act also places a statutory duty on the Council, along with the other Responsible Authorities (Police, Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Bedfordshire and Rescue Service, Bedfordshire Probation Trust), to produce an annual Strategic Assessment which identifies crime and disorder priorities for our area.
5. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 sets out the requirement for the PCC and the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to have due regard for each others priorities and plans. The timing of the Partnership Strategic Assessment and CSP Plan have ensured the PCC is informed of our priorities and the Office of the PCC has the opportunity to refresh the Police & Crime Plan.

**Risk Management:**

6. There are risks and challenges to working in partnership with the statutory partners of the CSP, should the Council not agree with the identified priorities.
7. There is a risk to the Council should it not agree with the partnership data and analysis that has been provided. If new priorities were to be agreed without supporting data and evidence, the process would not stand up to scrutiny, and would not be based on intelligence. This would make it difficult to gain support from partners to work with us on any new issue.
8. There are potential community implications if work on the high risk indentified priorities is not undertaken. The three areas have scored highest in the risk matrix, been highlighted through public consultation, and are known to affect Public Confidence and Fear of Crime (Appendix 1).

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

9. None

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

10. By working on the three priorities and emerging issues, there will not be unlawful discrimination or contradictions under the European Convention of Human Rights.
11. Statistics and data have been used and analysed to identify the high risk issues to the CSP and our communities. All members of our communities have been taken into account, and there have been no groups omitted from the process.
12. The impact of working on the proposed priorities will not discriminate against individuals or groups. In fact the work around Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Domestic Abuse will support minority groups and individuals who may not have felt supported, or engaged.
13. An Equality Impact Assessment has highlighted areas of concern due to low level reporting of ASB, Domestic Abuse and Crime by vulnerable groups. By recommending the three priorities the CSP we will also be addressing high risk areas identified in the Equality Impact Assessment.

**Public Health:**

14. The work of the CSP contributes to making Central Bedfordshire a safer place to work and live. Work on the three priorities will help support victims and lower the number of abuse incidents they have, support their wellbeing, and in turn support the local and national economy.

**Community Safety:**

15. The detrimental impact that ASB causes has continued to be a key concern for local residents. In agreeing this as a priority to be worked on by the partnership, it should help improve the quality of life for our communities; help reduce crime, the fear of crime and ASB itself.
16. Fear of crime is raised by local residents as a concern, and working on crimes that impact the most, in terms of victims and community impact, will support our co-ordinated approach to decrease fear in the community. ASB incidents and becoming a repeat victim have a significantly negative impact on our residents.
17. In 2013 the CSP developed a Community Matrix. This is a tool which can identify geographical areas of need based on collating a range of available data sets. The matrix is a tool to support and encourage wider strategic thinking around key geographical areas of need and provides intelligence data for locality based services. The Community matrix will be used to assist the CSP to understand where there is a need for engagement events, support services and communication, and will be used in conjunction with local surveys and consultations.

**Sustainability:**

18. The prevention and enforcement work that will be undertaken on the three priorities, can make a significant contribution to the quality of the physical environment, tackle those responsible for crime, disorder and ASB, and prevent some offences in Central Bedfordshire.

**Procurement:**

19. The CSP follows the Procurement Procedure Rules for Central Bedfordshire Council when procuring services and goods. The governance for commissioning of funds is set out within the Terms of Reference for the CSP.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **That the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommends to the Executive support of the three Partnership Strategic Assessment Priorities identified for 2014 - 2015. These Community Safety priorities are:**
  - (a) **Reduce the number of victims of ASB and supporting those who are most vulnerable**
  - (b) **Reduce the number of victims of Domestic Abuse and supporting those who are most vulnerable**
  - (c) **Reduce domestic burglary**

## Summary

### Performance Review 2013 - 2014

20. As part of the strategic assessment process the CSP has assessed performance over the past 12 months. Key points to note are detailed below.
21. Between October 2012 – September 2013 there were 88 more crimes recorded in Central Bedfordshire when compared to the same period the previous year.
22. Serious Acquisitive Crime<sup>1</sup> offences have increased by 19% with a significant increase in domestic burglary (32%)
23. Between October 2012 – September 2013 there were 7,486 ASB incidents reported in Central Bedfordshire, this is an average of 624 incidents per month. Due to recent changes in recording by Bedfordshire Police only one year of data is available and therefore, it is not possible to say if numbers have decreased or increased.
24. Both domestic abuse incidents and crimes were up, with 12% more incidents reported this year (1,834) compared to last (1,631) and 4% more crimes (850) this year compared to last year (817). This increase is due to the changes in the definition of domestic abuse made by the Home Office in April 2013, where the definition was widened to include those victims or perpetrators who were aged 16 – 17 years.

### Priorities for 2014 - 2015

25. A Partnership Strategic Assessment is a statutory requirement for all CSPs in England and Wales to undertake on a yearly basis. Using partnership data, information and intelligence, areas of risk and vulnerability are highlighted, priority issues are identified and recommendations are made. These priorities identify what the CSP should collectively work towards over the following year/s.
26. The Executive Summary of the Partnership Strategic Assessment (Appendix 2) sets out the scanning exercise that was completed together with the matrix used to determine the high risk priorities. These priorities are the highest risks for 2014 -2015. The matrix can be used as a guide by Members to ascertain what was considered in the scanning process. The full assessment is available as a background document.
27. The report proposes the three priorities for the Central Bedfordshire CSP 2014 – 2015. These are:-

### **Reducing the number of victims of ASB and supporting those who are most vulnerable**

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<sup>1</sup> Serious acquisitive crime consist of robbery, domestic burglary, theft of motor vehicle and theft from motor vehicle

28. The CSP will continue to enhance the ASB Risk Assessment Conference by embedding actions following its review in 2013. We will continue to support registered social landlords and deal with high risk ASB problems they face. This work will continue to enhance the specialist service provided to high risk victims of ASB. In addition to this sustained work we will focus on developing new processes and ways of working towards new ASB legislation and we will deal with motorcycle nuisance which has a detrimental effect on our local communities.
29. New ASB legislation is being introduced into the UK which is likely to come into effect in by autumn of 2014. The provisions of the Bill replace 19 existing ASB powers with six which are designed to be faster and more effective.

To understand the significant impact and changes in working practices this will mean for the CSP, a task and finish group will be set up to prepare for the arrival of the new Bill. The group will ensure the necessary training of officers and changes in working practices are in place, that briefing notes and communication material is prepared for the community and partners and that the CSP are able to deliver outcomes from the new legislation.

30. A key ASB issue in Central Bedfordshire is nuisance motorcycles. Road are used to access local farmer fields for off road riding. Reports of nuisance motorcycles start in April and continue to increase in numbers throughout the summer months.

Complaints of nuisance motorcycles are received by the PCC, Town / Parish Councils, Police and the Local Authority.

The CSP will work together through the Partnership Tasking Group to deal with the reoccurring issue of nuisance motorcycles in Central Bedfordshire. Short term, medium term and long term solutions will be considered and a partnership approach to problem solving will take place.

### **Reducing the number of victims of Domestic Abuse and supporting those who are most vulnerable**

31. The CSP will continue to support high risk cases of domestic abuse via the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference. We will continue to provide our high quality domestic abuse training package delivered to partners and front line officers.
32. In 40% of incidents the perpetrator is the victims current partner, 39% an ex partner and the remaining 21% are other family members. In 2012 the CSP introduced a community based Integrated Domestic Abuse programme aimed at offenders. Due to changes for the service provider, Bedfordshire Probation Trust, from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 the programme will not be able to accept any further referrals. The CSP will review the options that are available to support offenders to change their behaviours.
33. The CSP has identified key locations which are the most deprived areas and where vulnerable communities live. The CSP will map the current services available in those areas; understand what services offer and their client levels. Following this mapping, a series of service events to be arranged to promote local services to the community.

34. It can be predicted that there will be a significant increase of domestic abuse in July – August 2014. This reoccurring seasonal increase is linked to the school holidays and major sporting events, where levels of alcohol being consumed increases which result in an increased number of domestic abuse incidents. In the summer of 2014 there are two major sporting events. The CSP will conduct a communication and media campaign ahead of both events.

### **Reduce domestic burglary**

35. The CSP will continue to bring partners and stakeholders together in vulnerable areas and conduct awareness raising events, which are themed on the need of the local community. We will continue to analyse key data and information and refer offenders to the Integrated Offender Management programme, or the relevant partner, so support and/or enforcement can be provided. In addition to this ongoing work we will also focus on key hot spot areas and increase community visibility, increase property marking and increase awareness of the stolen good market.
36. In the three main hotspot areas for burglaries it is evident the majority take place during the daytime whilst properties are unattended and victims are at work. The CSP has started to work with Neighbourhood and Street Watch to increase the number of schemes in Central Bedfordshire primarily focussing in the three hotspot areas, to increase data and intelligence sharing, and increase joint communication opportunities.
37. In the majority of burglary offences the main property stolen is jewellery and small handheld electrical items. The CSP will promote property marking at all community events and consider supplying those in vulnerable areas with property marking kits.

The CSP will work with Trading Standards to increase the knowledge and awareness of local second hand dealers regarding potential stolen property, to increase reporting of suspicious sellers and to increase spot checks of items being sold.

38. The CSP will work with partners to ensure that the CSP Tasking Group are made aware of operations being carrying out in other areas of Bedfordshire where there is a suspected impact on crime levels due to displacement of offenders. We will seek to mitigate the impact of displacement by utilising available resources in key areas, raise awareness in the community and task voluntary groups accordingly.

### **Emerging Issues**

39. The CSP relies on data, intelligence and information from a range of partners to understand key issues and risks for our communities. Not all issues can be fully understood until additional research has been completed to gain a better understanding of the problem. Once research has been completed the CSP can work together to mitigate identified risks and support the community in the most appropriate way.

There are a number of emerging issues that could impact and influence the work of the CSP during 2014-2015, which we need to gain a better understanding of. These issues will be considered and worked on by the CSP.

#### 40. Transforming Rehabilitation: A strategy for reform

Under the Ministry of Justice's Transforming Rehabilitation agenda, Probation Trusts will be reorganised into one new National Probation Service and 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) from 1 April 2014. The CRC for Bedfordshire will also cover Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Northamptonshire.

The National Probation Service will have responsibility for carrying out risk assessments of all offenders and will manage service users who pose a high risk of serious harm to the public. The CRC will have responsibility for providing supervision and rehabilitative services to all other offenders.

The successful bidder will take over the running of the CRC in autumn 2014. Between 1 April 2014 and autumn 2014 a shadow CRC will be run by a team appointed by the Ministry of Justice.

The CSP needs to work to understand the impact of these changes for communities and offenders in Central Bedfordshire

#### 41. Tackling sexual violence against children

The Home Office is leading a cross-government programme, established in the wake of recent high profile exploitation cases, to tackle sexual violence against children.

Across Bedfordshire there is evidence of a surge in the numbers of child exploitation in Bedfordshire following high-profile national cases such as Operation Yewtree<sup>2</sup>. Reports are a mixture of historic and current cases.

A pilot Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Conference is now running, which hears cases of high risk children and young people who have or are suffering with sexual exploitation.

The CSP needs to conduct further work to understand the prevalence of cases in Central Beds and the support victims need.

#### 42. Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is the recruitment and movement of people by means such as violent force, fraud, coercion or deception with the aim of exploiting them. It is modern slavery. A Modern Slavery Bill will shortly be published which will support police to pursue and prosecute these criminals.

The recent slavery case in Central Bedfordshire has shown that this is an issue relevant to Central Bedfordshire, but further research and intelligence will be needed to determine the scale of the problem locally.

Following the publication of the Modern Slavery Bill the CSP will set out the implication for local areas together with what support is needed moving forward.

#### 43. The Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan

The Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan will set out how Central Bedfordshire will meet the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community and Travelling Show people community up to 2031.

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<sup>2</sup> The national operation in light of the Jimmy Saville allegations

We understand that Gypsy and Travellers are adversely affected by hate crime in the community and in schools, and we understand that domestic abuse does not get reported within that community.

The CSP will work with the Council's Corporate Policy Advisor to understand community tensions, impact and feedback from the Gypsy & Traveller Local Plan.

The Partnership Hate Crime Task and Finish Group will discuss the implications resulting from the Gypsy & Traveller Local Plan and incorporate them where appropriate in the Hate Crime Action Plan

44. Welfare Reform

The Government's welfare reforms represent the most fundamental changes to the benefits system in a generation. On average the combined impact of welfare reforms will have the effect of reducing incomes for claimant households by £1,615 per year (around £1 for every £7 of income).

The Council has established a Welfare Reform Programme Board, which has commissioned a Resident Impact Analysis to provide insight into changes at both resident and community levels to enable the development of an effective response. This will include both baseline quantitative analysis (published December 2013) and qualitative field study into the 'life, health and well-being' of residents in Central Bedfordshire (published April 2014).

The CSP continues to keep the impact of welfare reform under review to determine the impact on individuals and communities, providing support and interventions as needed.

45. Organised Crime Groups

The Government have stated that organised crime<sup>3</sup> is one of the top five policing priorities due to threat; harm and risk posed and is reflected in their new Organised Crime Strategy which was launched in conjunction with the National Crime Agency.

Bedfordshire Police have identified 58 organised crime groups (OCG) which impact on the county, with approximately 414 nominal's some of whom support more than one OCG. The diverse make up of OCGs reveals they do not always focus on one crime type, but are often involved in multi commodity and multi-faceted offending.

There is a need for the CSP to support coordinate working to collect, assess and evaluate intelligence in order to stem the opportunity for organised crime to take root and to conduct campaigns to deter and disrupt existing groups

The CSP will work closely with Bedfordshire Police to understand the impact of OCGs in Central Bedfordshire and to continue to develop methods to share data and intelligence to disrupt existing OCGs and prevent new ones forming.

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<sup>3</sup> Organised crime – individuals working with others, with the capacity and capability to commit serious crime on a continuing basis, which includes elements of planning, control and co-ordination and benefits those involved.



## **Implementation & Review**

46. In considering the report, the three priorities identified, and the key emerging issues, the Committee should note that the partnership will target its work towards these. A review of outcomes will take place after six months. This review will monitor progress, the partnership work taking place and it will consider if there are any other community safety risks that need to be addressed. This update report is used to inform the Partnership and at the end of the year it informs the next Strategic Assessment.
47. Performance reporting is in place for the CSP against these priorities, and plans are outcome focussed. Performance management is undertaken via the CSP Executive Group, which considers overall performance, funding, the Strategic Assessment and Partnership Plan, and ensures that the CSP complies with statutory requirements and adopts best practice.
48. The CSP Steering Group takes a co-ordinated, problem solving approach to identifying, planning and implementing approved outcomes to support the priorities in the Partnership Plan. Partners will inform the group of the progress in their areas, the progress towards their action plans and their outcomes. The Steering Group is also required to make recommendations to the CSP Executive on various aspects of the partnership work.
49. Specific delivery groups then look at individual priorities, which have actions / delivery plans, and deliver the tactical activity required to reduce risk and improve performance.

## **Consultation**

50. The three priorities are going out to public consultation via our social media sites and email alerts.

Each of the statutory partners has engaged in the prioritisation matrix and in the discussions to recommend the priorities for 2014 -2015.

Central Bedfordshire Members have been consulted via the members bulletin dated 11<sup>th</sup> December 2013 and have been invited to comment on them.

## **Conclusion**

51. It is essential that Central Bedfordshire CSP has an agreed set of priorities, and identified emerging issues which have been informed by the Partnership Strategic Assessment.
52. The three priorities proposed are based on a robust assessment of the key community safety issues in Central Bedfordshire
53. By working on the three priorities, and conducting research on our emerging issues, the CSP will contribute significantly to the achievements of the Council's plan for delivering its key priorities over the next four years.

## **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Risk Matrix for the Partnership Strategic Assessment

Appendix 2 – Executive Summary of the Partnership Strategic Assessment

Appendix 3 – Glossary of Terms